

Anoka City Council chooses “middle of the road” option for solid waste collection

After holding a public hearing on April 27, 2015 and providing additional time to receive written comments, the Anoka City Council voted 4-0 at their May 26 council meeting to choose a “middle of the road” option for modifying residential solid waste collection.

The council voted to direct staff to bring forward a draft ordinance to reduce the number of residential solid waste licenses to three. The city currently has seven licensed haulers. The reduction would occur naturally through market forces such as acquisition and mergers. As these events occurred, licenses would be automatically reduced down to the maximum number set by city ordinance. City Manager Tim Cruikshank stated, “We wouldn’t force anyone out of Anoka.” Councilmembers agreed that this was a good compromise between some who proposed government managed trash collection and others who proposed maintaining the current open system with unlimited licenses.

Other options before the council included taking no action on the issue, assigning each of the existing haulers to a zone in the city, or selecting a single hauler. The latter two options would eliminate all citizen choice in selecting a hauler which generated stiff opposition from the community.

The only person who strongly advocated for eliminating choice was Mayor Phil Rice, who was absent from the meeting. Mayor Rice asked Councilmember Mark Freeburg to relay the message to the council that he was in favor of a single hauler. He wanted to do what was best, not what was popular. He wanted single hauler due to less wear and tear on roads. Mr. Freeburg said that initially he was of the same thinking of the mayor but now could go to a single hauler or a reduction in licenses to three. At three, he said that we would still have competition in the community.

Councilmember Jeff Weaver, the staunchest advocate for maintaining the city’s current open system, said that he could support this compromise. He also inquired about additional options the haulers could offer the community such as smaller containers, every other week pickup, or other customized services.

Mr. Cruikshank then raised the issue of increasing fees for licenses, which haulers are required to obtain from the city on an annual basis. Mr. Freeburg immediately inquired about the amount of the increase, stating that increased costs are passed onto the consumers. He openly asked if the council wanted to increase the rate customers had to pay. He then stated that if it was needed for roads, then we have to do it. Mr. Cruikshank indicated that any increase would be minor and that staff would provide findings to support the increase.

Prior to the start of the meeting, there was brief discussion that there was no evidence of safety issues with garbage trucks in the city’s recent history. A recent Bloomington study of garbage truck safety was also shared. This study showed that in the past 15 years there was one garbage truck accident in the city and the truck was the victim. During the same time period of time, there were over 100 city vehicle accidents where the city was at fault.

Beyond the Mayor’s and Mr. Freeburg’s brief comment about road wear and tear, the issue was not discussed any further at this meeting. It was a topic of discussion at the public hearing and previous council meetings. A Fridley report was cited which claimed a 17% reduction in road life due to garbage trucks, but the report was solely based upon a universally applied mathematical formula. Public Works Directors in the cities of Arden Hills, Bloomington, and Roseville have all publicly stated that there would be no measurable savings in road maintenance due to the removal of some garbage trucks.

Mr. Cruikshank stated that staff would bring back language to reduce and cap the number of residential hauler licenses and modify the annual licensing fee at a future city council meeting.

— ACR staff

New Brighton City Council allows fowl on residential properties

Chicken farmers won’t have to move to Minneapolis after all

by Rick Moses — guest columnist

Special to the *Anoka County Record*

An angry set of New Brighton residents who have been raising chickens on their properties threatened to move to Minneapolis if they weren’t able to stop a ban on chicken farming in the city. This was stated at the May 12th city council meeting, which was the subject of a column in last week’s edition of the *Record*. Now we can provide you this update.

The council directed staff on May 12th to draft an ordinance that would ban the keeping of fowl altogether, since discussions had reached a stalemate.

The ordinance was presented for a council vote on the 26th.

Once the meeting got underway, councilor Brian Strub successfully sidetracked the ban by asking the council to revive the ordinance that was proposed at the May 12 meeting, adding an amendment setting a limit of 6 chickens or fowl. What followed was a painfully slow discussion of items that should have been thought through months before.

Mayor Dave Jacobsen wondered aloud why chickens and turkeys were not allowed at this year’s State Fair. Was it to protect birds or people? He added, “I’ve had people call me and say, ‘are you going to rip my kids’ pets right out of their hands and strangle them?’ This is not rational. No, we’re not.”

Jacobsen lamented, “this issue has divided the city in a way that is beyond my comprehension.” He was surprised by the level of anger and “threatening comments” he had received — “I’m not intimidated by them, nor do I care if they move out of this city.”

Councilor Mary Burg once again attacked the flier that brought citizens to the earlier meeting. She said it was inaccurate and caused fear. She said the health issue was not proven. Gina Bauman countered with a well-researched medical case. A New Brighton resident had been diagnosed with histoplasmosis from a neighbor’s chickens. Bauman stated that the entire council had been given a letter which described the case.

Strub, Burg, and Paul Jacobsen appeared well rehearsed and voted “Aye” loudly on each of their amendments. The three were determined to have chickens in New Brighton. Apparently, all the warnings from two weeks prior about health issues and pollution of the Rice Creek watershed had no affect on their thinking.

City Manager Dean Lotter made a rambling attempt to praise both sides for their courage in making their positions known, after he had steered portions of the discussion.

In the end, the vote was 3-2 with the mayor joining Bauman against the ordinance.

Chicken farmers must register with the city, the limit is six chickens or other fowl on any sized lot, no roosters, and no butchering of birds outside. Coops are limited to 10’ x 20’. No licensing fee?

Strub was inspired by the language of Circle Pines’s ordinance, “no outside butchering.” He had it on his computer screen ready to recite. He proposed this language be adopted in the New Brighton ordinance. Mayor Jacobsen asked if that meant it was permissible to butcher inside a house, inside a garage, as long as it wasn’t “outside”. Strub just repeated that language again and no one gave an answer to the mayor’s question. They went ahead and voted.

The issue is not likely to go away. The nuisance factor will probably rise. Suburbanites who like to keep up their property will be unhappy if chickens and their coops are raised on either side of them. It’s up to the citizenry to make complaints. Staff promises to act on those complaints, which is how they often enforce ordinances that are unenforceable.

Councilor Bauman made a point about expecting citizens to police the city’s chicken population. Bauman said she received a call from a resident who was afraid to complain about the chicken that is already next door. It would seem that if a number of residents are afraid to tattle on their neighbor, there will be fewer complaints for city staff to contend with. Which is probably all right by them.

There’s an election coming up. City council candidates start filing July 28.

Observations from the Field Rick Moses



Chickens = A Stronger Community for New Brighton. Chicken advocates outside city hall before the May 26 council meeting.

Senator Benson’s 2015 Session Wrap-up

The 2015 legislative session has come to an end and the legislature presented the governor with all of the required budget bills, but I am disappointed to report that the governor has vetoed the education budget bill, with the possibility of more vetoes coming. This sets up the necessity of a special session, which will likely happen sometime in June. The governor has proposed universal, institutionalized preschool for public school students, which is the major reason why he vetoed the education budget bill. It really is disappointing that the governor has sided with special interest union groups like Education Minnesota over Minnesota children who should be spending those very formative years learning and playing at home, preschool, or in child care. We need to let our children be children. They will have enough years in school. We need to simply let them be kids.

There was some good that happened this session. There were common sense changes to our gun laws, help to mitigate the Avian Flu, and reforms in child protection. There is much left undone. The governor and Senate Democrats not interested in significant reform to education or human services even as they increased spending by billions of dollars. There was no tax bill to provide relief to Minnesota families, even given the \$2 billion surplus. Because of the Republicans in the House, the governor’s demand for a gas tax failed.

Return on Taxpayer Investment

One of my bills, the “Return on Taxpayer Investment” law, passed this year, in the state government budget bill. This bill will establish a cost-benefit approach to measure the potential return on an investment in the area of human services — one of the biggest pieces of Minnesota’s budget. This methodology, the Results First method, is used successfully in 17 other states.

Avian Flu

Millions of Minnesota’s turkeys have been affected by the Avian Flu, significantly hurting our farmers. We passed \$19 million in assistance.

No Major MNSure Reforms

Unfortunately, nothing happened to fix the broken product that is MNSure. A task force was established to study MNSure’s future, but I do not think that is enough. We have spent millions on MNSure and it needs significant reform — not a task force.

Sunday Liquor Sales

I’ve heard from many of you wanting to legalize Sunday liquor sales in Minnesota. It was attempted to be added as an amendment to

the liquor bill, but did not pass either the House or the Senate.

Other Controversial Provisions

Restored voting for felons, licenses for undocumented immigrants, and automatic voter registration were some of the proposals that did not pass this year.

Online Lottery Sales

The legislature passed a ban on online lottery sales this session. I do not believe the state lottery agency had the authority to sell lottery tickets at the gas pumps and online in the first place.

Physician Assisted Suicide

Thankfully, this did not go anywhere after its informational hearing in the Senate. I will continue to stand firmly opposed to any and all attempts to enact this in Minnesota.

Life is precious and I am committed to protecting it.

Health and Human Services

The Health and Human Services bill provides critical funding for nursing homes, something Republicans have made a priority for two years. Additionally, this bill provides more money to support those with mental illness in our state, as well as to increase child protection oversight, but lacks the significant reform that is needed to get outrageous spending under control and to finally reign in MNSure.

Transportation

Only a “lights on” minimal transportation bill was passed this session. We missed a significant opportunity to invest much of our \$2 billion surplus in transportation, but that money and option remains for next session.

State Department and Veterans

It has a 1.8% increase to grow state government bureaucracy, eliminates Political Contribution Refund (PCR) program and allows county auditors option to use private CPA firms to conduct audits. Additionally, it provides a 5% increase to veterans’ health care programs.

Higher Education

This bill contained no University of Minnesota tuition freeze and modified MnSCU tuition freeze. It established a small scale, need-based “free two year college” scholarship pilot program for FY17-18. It had \$122 million in tuition relief for MnSCU and UMN; MnSCU receives \$100 million. The state grant program increased by \$7 million and



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\$30 million went for UMN Medical School investment initiative.

Agriculture and Environment

This bill spends \$120 million over next biennium for Agriculture and \$253 million from general fund over next biennium for Natural Resources. There will be \$6.7 million in fee increases over the next two years. There was a buffer strip compromise – 50 foot width, to be enforced by local governments. The Toxic Free Kids language nor language dealing with microbeads was not included

Universal Pre-K Doesn’t Make Sense

School districts don’t want it. School boards don’t want it. Teachers don’t want it. Daycares don’t want it.

There are already many different choices and programs to prepare children to enter the public schools at kindergarten age.

It does not make sense — both from a practical and personal standpoint — to put 3- and 4-year olds on school buses in the morning. These children need to be hugged, play outside, and spend time learning at home, not institutionalized in a public school.

I have heard from many people, including teachers, parents, and administrators, telling me this is not a good idea and I will continue to stand opposed.

GOVERNMENT MEETINGS CALENDAR

- CITY OF HAM LAKE**, Ham Lake City Hall, 15544 Central Ave. NE (763) 434-9555 (www.ci.ham-lake.mn.us)
Hours Mon-Thurs 7 am-4:30 pm; Fri. 7 am-Noon)
Mon. June 1 — City Council, 6 pm
Mon. June 8 — Planning Comm., 6 pm
Mon. June 15 — City Council, 6 pm
CITY OF OAK GROVE, Oak Grove City Hall, 19900 Nightingale St. NW (763) 404-7000 (www.ci.oak-grove.mn.us)
Mon. June 8 — City Council, 7 pm
Thurs. June 11 — Planning Comm., 7 pm
CITY OF RAMSEY, 7550 Sunwood Dr NW; (763) 427-1410
Thurs. June 4 — EDA, 7:30 am
Thurs. June 4 — Planning Comm. 5:30 “work session”; regular mtg 7 pm
Tues. June 9 — City Council 5:30 “work session”; regular mtg 7 pm
CITY OF FRIDLEY, Fridley City Hall, 6431 University Ave NE, (763) 571-3450
Mon. June 1 — Parks & Rec. Comm., 7 pm
Mon. June 8 — City Council “workshop” 6:30 pm; mtg 7 pm
Tues. June 9 — Environment Quality & Energy Comm., 7 pm
COLUMBIA HEIGHTS ISD 13 SCHOOL DISTRICT, 1440 49th Ave. N.E., Columbia Heights (763) 528-4500
Tues. June 9 — School Board, 7 pm

Rep. Laine: “A messy semi-conclusion”

The 2015 Legislative Session has come to a messy semi-conclusion. With the Jobs Omnibus bill hurriedly stuffed into the last two minutes of session by the House Republican majority, there wasn’t even time to see what had made it into this bill. The conference committee had been unable to conclude the bill on their own seven hours before the end of session, and Speaker Daubt and Senate Majority Leader Bakk had to step in. Then it was amended in the Senate. Yet, it was rammed through at the very end in the House with no transparency.



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At the same time, the Legacy bill and a smaller-than-usual yet important Bonding bill were not able to be passed before midnight by both bodies. Adding to these failures of leadership by the Republican majority, the Tax bill had been dropped completely in the preceding weeks, as was a real Transportation bill. (We passed a “lights on” Transportation bill to keep MnDOT operating.)

At the start of this year, everyone in both parties had agreed we have enormous transportation infrastructure needs, and this session was to be the “Transportation Session.”

These failures are added to the Education bill that went forth in spite of Governor Dayton’s promise of a veto if it ignored real early education funding. A compromise offered to the House Republican majority by the Governor to drop his request for universal pre-K and add \$125 million for early education options, was refused – despite a \$2.1 billion surplus. Therefore, the Governor continues to promise a veto, meaning a special session will be needed.

Ethnic Councils Reform

The most extensive and challenging legislation I did this year was to reform the structure and operation of the three ethnic councils. These small state agencies were created in the late 1970’s and early 1980’s as the eyes and ears of state government into the communities of Latino, African-American, and Asian-Pacific Minnesotans, and to be a liaison for these communities into democratic change.

I am a legislative representative to the Council on Asian-Pacific Minnesotans. My experience, along with the report from the Office of the Legislative Auditor about the effectiveness of these councils, prompted me to work on better accountability for these small but important state agencies. I very much value the potential of people working together on issues, so I did not agree with those who sought to eliminate the councils. Too many disparities still exist for these communities; we need to work together.

My work was bipartisan; accountability is not a partisan issue. But change is hard, especially after 35 years of gradually slipping into a status quo. In spite of my working with all involved, those who do not wish to change tried hard to discredit me and my work. However, this legislation is moving into passage via the State Government Omnibus bill. I will continue to commit my time and energy to these councils and their effectiveness in the important work of establishing equity for all in Minnesota.

I want to thank you all for staying involved and informed throughout the session. I can’t do my work without you and hope you’ll stay involved as we move to a (hopefully) short special session. Please continue to contact me by email rep.carolyn.laine@house.mn or phone 651-296-4331.



ANOKA COUNTY WATCHDOG

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Always on the lookout for governmental waste, fraud, and abuse in Anoka County

Quote of the Week: “They hate the public schools, some of the Republican legislators. They’re loathe to provide any additional money for public schools and for public school teachers because all of the good programs I’ve seen around this state for pre-K and all-day kindergarten. All of those programs contradict what they say, which is public schools do things badly.”

— Governor Mark Dayton

Quote of the Week II: “I think it really is incumbent on the governor to work with legislators and to reach out to them and sell his plan if he thinks we need to do something differently than what we passed.”

— House Speaker Kurt Daudt

OUT WITH A BANG OR A WHIMPER?

Closing out at the stroke of midnight Monday night, the 2015 legislature came to crashing conclusion.

Or did it?

As this edition of the Watchdog goes to press, the governor has still not delivered on his promise to veto the education funding bill and possibly a veto of other omnibus spending bills.

Moreover, a small number of other bills deemed important and timely did not get passed in time, including a small bonding bill and a bill authorizing legislative staff to make administrative changes to bills.

There are three important aspects of the session’s end that merit examination.

The first is the way the session ended in the Minnesota House.

A critical spending bill was passed in the final moments of session with no discussion or debate.

While this is certainly not the ideal way to craft legislation, it is understandable when both sides of the story are told.

First, for better or worse, legislative sessions often end with a certain amount of chaos and confusion.

Readers shouldn’t be tempted to fall for the DFL narrative that Republicans can’t manage the Minnesota House and operated in the final minutes in a manner not regularly seen in the People’s House.

Perhaps the most chaotic and heavy-handed of all recent last days of a legislative session was in 2007, when the DFL had control.

The final day was marked by oppressive DFL tactics to cut off all debate and gag the minority Republicans from having an opportunity to speak and debate the issues.

In fact, the DFL used unprecedented parliamentary tactics to shut down debate and pass bills.

Watch for yourself.

Moreover, the final chaotic minutes of the session’s last day were in fact the result of the Republican majority being too indulgent and respectful of the DFL minority.

Anyone who watched the last hours of the session could plainly see that the DFL minority was attempting to run out the clock in the hope that critical spending bills wouldn’t have time to pass, thereby trying to embarrass the GOP majority.

Yes, the DFL was playing politics even though they dishonored themselves and insulted the law making process while also potentially hurting many of those they claim to care about if state funding were to be held up.

Many DFL legislators stood up to ask questions about what was in the bill, even though they could (and should) have read the bill themselves.

They wandered off on irrelevant tangents, wasting valuable time throughout the day and evening.

The tactic almost worked, except that the Speaker made the difficult decision in the final minutes to pass the spending bill without allowing debate.

In short, it was DFL game playing that led to the chaotic end.

If DFL legislators were truly interested in a thoughtful and respectful conclusion to the session, they should have refrained from their dilatory and obstructive tactics.

Next, a DFL meme has gained traction that says that the Speaker of the House closed off voting before some legislators had a chance to vote on the final bill.

Not true.

The reality is that they decided not to vote in an attempt to lend credibility to their corrupt narrative.

The refusal to vote is not only a dereliction of the duty to represent one’s constituents, it is a violation of the permanent rules of the Minnesota House of Representatives.

Rule 2.05 states in part:

Every other member present before the result of a vote is declared by the presiding officer must vote for or against the matter before the House, unless the House excuses the member from voting. But a member is not required to vote on any matter concerning a memorial resolution.

A member who does not vote when the member’s name is called must state reasons for not voting. After the vote has been taken but before the presiding officer has announced the result of the vote, the presiding officer must submit to the House the question: “Shall the member, for the reasons stated, be excused from voting?” The question must be decided without debate. After the question is decided, the presiding officer must announce the result of the vote, after which other proceedings about the nonvoting member may take place.

The plain and simple reason the session ended the way it did in the House is because Democrats conspired to collapse the process in a cynical attempt to make the majority Republicans look bad.

Let’s now take a moment to consider the governor’s insistence upon a universal scheme to have the state begin educating 4 year-old children.

This, of course, is the reason the governor has threatened to veto the education funding bill and has lost his marbles (once again), going off on Republicans and claiming they hate teachers and public schools.

This is yet one more example of both DFL cynicism as well as Governor Dayton incompetence.

Recall that this initiative was rejected on a bi-partisan basis in both the House and Senate.

The idea didn’t pass in either the DFL-led Senate or the GOP-led House. The rejection was bi-partisan.

Moreover, if this was such a high priority, the governor should have focused on it and spent some political capital to make it happen.

Speaker Daudt is correct in noting that the legislature and more specifically Republicans, aren’t to blame.

It’s up to the governor to generate support for his key initiatives and drive them to fruition.

Perhaps most importantly, Minnesota’s public schools don’t want the program.

These school districts note that the program would require millions in capital spending to build classrooms as well as require the hiring of more teachers.

There would be more expenses for additional bussing, school supplies, and utility costs.

Most of which would be borne locally through additional levies.

They also note that there is no definitive evidence that these programs are the best way to ensure that children arrive at kindergarten prepared to learn.

Even the state’s newspapers are picking up on this, with the *Pioneer Press* and Owatonna newspapers

being two that have editorialized against the governor vetoing the education funding bill over the omission of this program.

Finally, let’s take a very brief overview of the budget deal, both because the subject will be its own column later on and because the final deal may not be done pending the governor’s signature.

Of course, there is much complaining and gnashing of teeth from some Tea Party quarters over the budget deal.

Look, the Watchdog agrees with the sentiment that this budget deal wasn’t great.

Having said that, we part company with our Tea Party friends when they blame Republicans for not doing enough in Saint Paul.

This negotiated result was foreordained last November, when Mark Dayton was re-elected in convincing fashion.

Republicans started and ended the session on defense.

Just like in hockey, a 2 on 1 obligates the “one” to play defense and break up the scoring chances of the other team.

If some our conservative brothers and sisters don’t like the outcome, they should have worked harder to elect Jeff Johnson, making the 2 on 1 work the other way.

Like it or not, this circumstance requires Watchdogs to examine the outcome primarily through the lens of what didn’t happen as opposed to what happened.

There was no tax on gasoline at the wholesale level, preventing a tax of 16-26 cents per gallon, and a regressive tax at that.

Massive, double digit spending increases were averted, unlike the previous biennium, when the DFL ran the whole show.

Over \$1 billion was left on the bottom line, enabling the GOP to come back next year and work for tax cuts.

And yes, there were spending increases that the GOP favored.

Again, this was an outcome foreordained back in November, when the vast majority of House GOP pickups were seats in rural Minnesota.

As the Watchdog explained months ago, rural legislators aren’t of the same stripe as their Metro colleagues when it comes to matters of fiscal discipline.

Rural legislators, even Republicans, see their public schools as a positive and a cornerstone of the community.

They also rely on funding from Saint Paul to fund infrastructure in a way the Metro doesn’t.

Moreover, demographics dictate that rural legislators give a high priority to nursing homes.

Thus, it should come as no surprise that the House GOP majority gave a healthy spending increase to both nursing homes and public schools.

To expect a different outcome under these circumstances is sheer fantasy.

Given the circumstances, Speaker Daudt and his team played a mediocre hand very well and leveraged limited political capital to get the best possible outcome.

No reasonable conservative should be mad at Republicans for this good outcome.

If you want a better outcome, stop complaining and get out there and elect more Republicans in 2016.

The Anoka County Watchdog is a place where concerned taxpayers can find fact-supported information and other resources about governmental waste and abuse in Anoka County. My intent is to provide you, the taxpayer, with the information you need to hold your local politicians accountable.

Visit my website and sign up for free weekly e-mail updates at www.AnokaCountyWatchdog.com or contact me personally at harold@anokacountywatchdog.com.

Sincerely,

Harold E. Hamilton, owner.

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Court orders school district to come clean on spending activity for levy referendum

By Tom Steward — *Watchdog.Org Minnesota Bureau*

St. Louis County Schools have finally gotten the message. There’s a tough, new set of rules for districts that take sides in expensive school bond referendums and use taxpayer money to do it.

But it took five years, a unanimous Minnesota Supreme Court decision and two administrative law court reprimands, underscored by a token fine, to reach this point.

”It is precedent-setting. It’s the first school district, when it comes to ballot questions, that had to comply with the campaign finance laws, if you’re going to promote a ballot question,” said John Colosimo, a Virginia attorney for the district in the latest administrative law court setback. “The case has provided clarification with what school districts have to disclose.”

Three administrative law judges have again sent the northern Minnesota district back to drawing board with a May 20 order. The district’s assignment? Recalculate the cost to taxpayers of promoting a controversial \$79 million referendum that narrowly passed in 2009.

Chalk up another one for a citizens’ group that never stopped pressing the district — Minnesota’s largest —for accountability, years after the new classrooms went up.

“Our school district put out information suggesting that there was a huge financial crisis that they were facing, that there was no other solution for. We were able to show through documents that this was basically fiction,” said Marshall Helmberger, a member of the Coalition of Community Schools who testified in the case.

As publisher of the *Timberjay* newspaper, Helmberger pressed the district for documents on referendum spending in a second case that went to the Minnesota Supreme Court.

“We wanted to make sure residents of other school districts did not suffer this same experience. And as a result of the work that we’ve done now, we’re very close to having rules of the road set.”

The law requires referendum committees to report disbursements and contributions totaling more than \$750, including the date and purpose of each expenditure.

Independent School District 2142’s initial report — filed with the Minnesota Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board — listed \$12,561.72 of public funding for the promotional campaign. Expenses included mainly print, postage and design costs for sending newsletters to residents and parents of the district’s 2,000 students.

Not even close, the administrative law panel found, given the district’s \$58,000 communications contract with project manager, Johnson Controls. The schools claimed just a fraction of the \$58,000 went to promotional efforts.

“The Panel rejects the School District’s position that only eight percent of the \$58,000 communications bill was for promotional activities. The District asserts that this figure was supplied by Johnson Controls, but the percentage is unsupported in the record and lacks any factual basis,” the 26-page decision states.

The court ordered St. Louis County Schools to recalibrate and add campaign expenditures for polling, telephone surveys, related report, referendum planning and other activities.

“We’ll try to be as accurate as we can. Whatever the bottom line number is, makes no difference to me, I just want it to be done right,” said first-year St. Louis County Schools Superintendent Steve Sallee, who inherited the controversy. “I don’t care if it said \$1 or \$100,000, it made no difference. I just wanted someone to tell us what to include.”

The citizens’ group challenging the district’s numbers believes the total amount of staff time and taxpayer resources dedicated to the ballot campaign will never be known. In the end, the ballot question was just as much of a referendum on how and whether districts should take sides in big spending proposals as whether to build two schools.

“What we’re trying to show are the conflicts of interest,” said Erick Kaardal, attorney for the plaintiffs. “Step by step, we’re getting greater disclosure of the close cooperation between these vested companies in these bond referenda and school district boards, and showing their conflicts of interest.”

SCHOOL DISTRICT ORDERED TO DISCLOSE CAMPAIGN ACTIVITY *cont. on page 5*

ANOKA COUNTY SHERIFF CRIME REPORT

ANDOVER

Thefts & Damage to Property

May 19 — 26xx 138 Ave NW – Craigslist Scam – victim was selling a car battery on Craig's List and was sent a check for \$759 more than the purchase. The victim sent the battery and overpayment back to an address in Alabama.

May 19 — 14xx 146 Lane NW – the air in multiple tires on two vehicles parked in the driveway was let out

May 21 — 136xx Martin St NW – a popcorn machine was stolen out of a vacant business

Burglaries

May 19 — 22xx 180 Ave NW – a resident returned home and found 2 males inside her home; when they saw her they exited a sliding glass door. The case remains under investigation.

Arrests

May 22 — Bunker Lake Blvd/Goldenrod – Property Damage Accident, Careless Driving, No DL in Possession, No Proof of Insurance; deputies responded to a crash involving a vehicle that struck a power pole. They arrived and the driver stated he was extremely tired and fell asleep. The power company was contacted and the driver was issued a citation.

BETHEL

Thefts & Damage to Property

May 20 — 236xx University Ave NW – business – a construction dumpster was stolen from the business

COLUMBUS

Thefts & Damage to Property

May 18 — 94xx Lake Dr NE – business – a screen on a Red Box machine was vandalized

May 20 — 81xx Broadway Ave NE – damage to a mailbox and trash cans

EAST BETHEL

Thefts & Damage to Property

May 19 — 3100 Block 182 Ave NE – a boat and motor was stolen from a dock

May 19 — 183xx Hwy 65 NE – business – windshields of vehicles parked on a car lot were shot with a bb gun

May 19 — 46xx 200 Lane NE – a GPS was stolen from an unlocked vehicle in the driveway

Arrests

May 15 — Terroristic Threats, Obstructing, Domestic Assault, DANCO Violation; deputies responded to a husband/wife domestic. The husband was arrested. The Alex House was notified.

May 15 — 5th Degree Domestic Assault; deputies responded to a father/daughter domestic. Both were arrested. The Alex House was notified.

May 20 — Domestic Assault; deputies responded to a mother/son domestic. The son had left the location but was found by deputies and arrested. The Alex House was notified.

HAM LAKE

Burglaries

May 15 — 12xx 171 Lane NE – business – a fence was cut to gain entry and locks were cut off of enclosed trailers to steal tools

May 18 — 176xx Hwy 65 NE – business – window glass was broken to make entry; soldering wire, chain saw, copper wire and tubing

May 21 — 159xx Austin St NE – victim reported someone opened a \$25K line of credit in his name at Navy Federal Credit Union

Thefts & Damage to Property

05.18 37xx 149 Ave NE – lawn ornaments stolen from a flower bed

Arrests

05.19 5th Degree Domestic Assault – Male/female domestic. The male had fled prior to deputies arriving. The Alex House was notified and a warrant for his arrest was issued.

LINWOOD

Thefts & Damage to Property

05.01 84xx 238 Ave NE – damage to a yard; dirt bike

Arrests

May 16 — 7000 Block of Viking – DWI; Property damage crash. Driver stated to deputies he was intoxicated. He failed field sobriety tests and was arrested. (.206)

May 19 —7200 Block of Fawn Lake Dr NE – Driving After Cancellation, No Insurance; A deputy stopped a driver for 59 in a 50. The driver was identified and found to not have a driver's license or insurance. He was arrested and his vehicle was towed.

NOWTHEN

Thefts & Damage to Property

May 17 — 183xx Krypton St NW; damage to mailbox overnight

OAK GROVE

Arrests

May 16 — 2000 Block of Lake George Pkwy; 5th Degree Controlled Substance, GM Warrant Arrest; on routine patrol a deputy observed a vehicle with a cracked windshield. The deputy ran the plate and the owner of the vehicle was showing a warrant. The deputy stopped the vehicle and identified the driver who had a warrant and he was arrested. While searching the vehicle prior to towing it meth was located. The Drug Task Force was notified.

May 21 — 221 Ave NW/Lake George Blvd NW – 2nd Degree Test Refusal, 3rd Degree DWI; speeding and driving in the wrong lane. The driver appeared intoxicated and admitted to consuming two alcoholic beverages. She failed field sobriety tests and was arrested. The charges were elevated due to a prior DWI. (.178)

The Sheriff’s office reports of two common crimes that have been occurring in the metro area:

Property owners are not always locking the cars they park outside. Thieves find the garage door openers in unlocked cars to gain access to garages.

Homeowners have also been robbed while they sleep — they didn’t lock their house doors.

WILDER PAGEANT



walnutgrove.org

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Laura Ingalls Wilder

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SCHOOL DISTRICT ORDERED TO DISCLOSE CAMPAIGN ACTIVITY

cont. from page 4

While recognizing the difficulty ISD 2142 faces in providing documentation for a referendum held more than five years ago, the administrative law court raised the bar for future promotional campaigns.

“Going forward, school districts that meet the definition of a committee under Chapter 211A are on notice to request and maintain detailed invoices regarding their campaign expenditures for campaign finance reporting purposes,” the ruling said.

In the end, taxpayers pay coming and going — a \$79 million bond referendum plus district legal fees topping more than \$300,000.

“In order for the district to do what the court has ordered it to do, the cost to defend this and to get clarification as what to what it needed to disclose is something that is going to have an enormous impact on the district financially,” said Colosimo, the attorney for the district.

Stranger than fiction: Library on two wheels

By Tom Steward — *Watchdog.Org Minnesota Bureau*

They call it a little library on wheels. Not a bookmobile, but a book bike — the latest twist in the plot to drive more traffic to flagging Minnesota libraries.

The state’s first book bike just rolled out from the Rochester Public Library, and \$7,000 in taxpayer-provided grants from the Legacy Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund and regional library system paved the way.

“We were just out today and people were so excited about it. They love to come over and talk about it and talk about how it’s an innovative idea,” said Heather Acerro, youth services director for Rochester Public Library.

But libraries hoping to follow in Rochester’s tracks may need to get in gear. Legislators are negotiating a cut in regional libraries’ \$3 million annual Legacy Fund appropriation, following a recent Watchdog Minnesota Bureau report on the program.

The report revealed spending on events ranging from the secret life of puppets (\$13,200), a farmer comedian (\$9,154), stage combat demonstrations (\$608), duct tape wearables classes (\$300) and a darkness series (\$3,816).

“I don’t think your article helped anything, I’ll put it that way,” said Elaine Keefe, a Capitol Hill Associates lobbyist, who represents the Minnesota Library Association at the Legislature.

Libraries use funding from a .0375 percent Legacy Amendment sales tax increase passed by voters to help attract a new audience. The number of visits to the Rochester Public Library has dropped off 11 percent in the past five years. A similar decline has hit libraries in the Twin Cities metro area. An uptick in the economy and advent of e-books and online information translates to less reliance on library services.

“You can do a lot of things from home as well, nowadays. As long as you get a library card and are a member of the library, from your house remotely you can log on to our website and go on to any of the online data bases,” said Purna Gurung, RPL’s administrative services coordinator.

After seeing book bikes already on the road in Boston, Cleveland, Denver, Phoenix, Seattle and other cities, Rochester went along for the ride. Skeptics ask whether taxpayers were taken for a ride, as well.

Book Bike continued on page 6

Video surveillance turns Minnesota into The Land of 30,000 Cameras

By Tom Steward — *Watchdog.Org Minnesota Bureau*

Don’t look up. You may be “live” on one of the 30,000 government surveillance cameras that security experts estimate to be mounted in the greater Twin Cities.

Not so slowly, but surely, metro cities and some government agencies are installing video technology capable of networking surveillance systems in a so-called ring of protection — and detection.

Some 25 metro area municipalities and two state agencies have deployed video surveillance systems that stream thousands of cameras watching city hall, municipal liquor stores, government buildings, transit hubs, police stations, highways and intersections.

Cities primarily use surveillance video to protect government property, prevent crime and prosecute offenders. The suburb of Brooklyn Center monitors 189 surveillance cameras trained on schools, a community center, a golf course and other city-operated facilities.

“We are trying to get video of who may be at the door entrances and exits in that perimeter around your building, and then some key locations inside the building, depending upon what the nature of our business unit is there,” said Patty Hartwig, information technology director for Brooklyn Center.

A Minneapolis security convergence company called Pro-Tec Design has incorporated standardized software (Milestone) that gives cities and agencies the option of someday taking the next step, sharing surveillance video between communities and other levels of government.

“That fictitious wiring, where you can all of a sudden flip the switch, and suddenly everybody’s sharing everybody’s video, we’re still far away from getting that stuff ready. But, at least from the conversational level and actual software level, we’re well down that path,” said Tim Ferrian, director of sales and marketing for Pro-Tec Design.

The chaotic 35-W bridge collapse and 2008 Republican National Convention protests led to a recognition that broader security camera video coverage could speed up emergency response times, cut through confusion and save lives.

There’s no central operations center to monitor and share video footage between cities and agencies in real time. But the Minnesota Department of Transportation traffic management center uses the same technology to share video footage from hundreds of highway cameras with cities on an as-needed basis.

The Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development uses the security software, but is not connected to other agencies or local governments.

“We’re having to go basically, city to city, to try to promote the story and the philosophy to get a movement going,” said Ferrian. “Each individual city can decide if they want to do this. Then it’s our job to help them form relationships and

connections with each other and neighboring cities.”

At the same time, some civil libertarians question whether the ring of protection in the making includes watching out for privacy rights.

“The technology is moving fast and city councils and public bodies, they’re not asking the questions,” said Rich Neumeister, a citizen watchdog who blogs at Open Secrets MN. “The questions are, what are we doing with this? Is it focused? What technology is it? Any kind of facial recognition? It all comes down to who’s watching the watchers.”

“Every organization needs to review their circumstances and determine the security solution that best meets their needs. We look for an appropriate balance between a person’s right to privacy and having the tools and information to keep the public safe,” said Vickie Schleuning, Brooklyn Center’s assistant city manager.

Over the past three years, Brooklyn Center has spent \$490,000 upgrading its cameras and security surveillance network. City authorities increasingly view video as an indispensable tool.

“Juries, judges prosecutors, they want video and they almost expect video,” said Cmdr. Brian Peters of the Brooklyn Center Police Department. “We’ve made a very large investment into technology, which in my opinion is a huge benefit, not only to the department but officers.”

The city discards most video files after 30 days. Footage from cash register cameras tied into point-of-sale software at two municipal liquor stores remains on the city server for 60 days to allow time for credit card transactions to clear. The video surveillance recently helped identify alleged credit card fraud in a case that involved several other cities.



RING OF DETECTION: Minneapolis has its own emergency operations center but there’s no clearing house for all cities with the video system to share footage yet.

“If we need to quickly reference a credit card or credit card theft, we can quickly make reference to that transaction in the video,” said Hartwig, Brooklyn Center’s I.T. expert. “So it’s easy for us to track and provide that information to officials, so they can proceed further with their investigation.”

As more cities upgrade their video surveillance, the system’s architect focuses on the bigger picture — an integrated network connecting the Twin Cities.

“We’re not going just on the city, but also on the county and state levels. We’re trying to connect them all,” Ferrian said.

ANOKA COUNTY
SUMMARY OF BIDS

Bid #2015-20
Description of Bid/RFP:
Advertisement for Bids
for Coon Rapids Dam
Boat Launch, Parking &
Roadway Reconstruction
Project
Bid Opening: June 30,
2015.
For more information
regarding the above
published bids/RFPs,
please visit the Anoka
County Web Site at: [www.
AnokaCounty.us/bids](http://www.AnokaCounty.us/bids).
(Published May 22, 29, June 5, 2015
Anoka County Record) #228

ANOKA COUNTY
BOARD MEETING
SUMMARY

The Anoka County
Board met on May 12,
2015. Standing county
committee information
reports and action items
were considered, and
action was taken as
necessary. The following
resolutions were adopted:
#2015-60 Licensed
Supervisors Agreement,
#2015-61 Convey Property
to Blaine EDA, #2015-62
Coon Creek Regional Trail
Master Plan Approval, and
#2015-63 Accepting Gift.
A full copy of the agenda,
minutes, accounts, and
claims greater than \$2000
may be found on the
Anoka County Web site:
www.anokacounty.us
(Published May 29, 2015
Anoka County Record) #230

OFFICE OF THE
MINNESOTA
SECRETARY OF STATE
CERTIFICATE OF
ASSUMED NAME
MINNESOTA STATUTES,
CHAPTER 333

The filing of an assumed
name does not provide a
user with exclusive rights
to that name. The filing
is required for consumer
protection in order to
enable consumers to be
able to identify the true
owner of a business.

1. List the exact assumed
name under which the
business is or will be
conducted:

**Edible Arrangements
Blaine**

2. Principal Place of
Business:
**10340 Baltimore St NE
#140
Blaine, MN 55449**

3. List the name and
complete street address
of all persons conducting
business under the above
Assumed Name, OR if an
entity, provide the legal
corporate, LLC, or Limited
Partnership name and
registered office address:
**Delta I, LLC
475 Arlington Ave W
Saint Paul, MN 55117**

4.. I, the undersigned,
certify that I am signing
this document as the
person whose signature is
required, or as agent of the
person(s) whose signature
would be required who
has authorized me to
sign this document on
his/her behalf, or in both
capacities. I further certify
that I have completed all
required fields, and that
the information in this
document is true and
correct and in compliance
with the applicable chapter
of Minnesota Statutes. I
understand that by signing
this document I am subject
to the penalties of perjury
as set forth in Section
609.48 as if I had signed
this document under oath.

FILED: May 28, 2015,
#828061000025,
/s/ Claudine Moon

(Published May 29, 2015 &
June 5, 2015,
Anoka County Record) #231

SCHWARTZMAN, ABELER, LOREN, STEIN, DEKEL
STATE OF MINNESOTA DISTRICT COURT
COUNTY OF ANOKA TENTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT
Court File Number 02-CV-15-2034

Betty Matthews, Plaintiff, vs.
The unknown heirs of Frances F. Schwartzman, aka
Frances S. Schwartzman (deceased), David Schwartz-
man and Ivan Schwartzman, as Trustees of the Max
Schwartzman Trust A created under the Last Will and
Testament of Max Schwartzman; the unknown heirs of
Frances F. Schwartzman, aka Frances S. Schwartzman
(deceased); David Schwartzman; Ivan Schwartzman;
L.A. Properties; James J. Abeler, II, aka J. Joseph Abel-
er, II; Barbara Jo Abeler; James Loren; Heidi Loren; So-
briety House, Inc.; the unknown heirs of Jeneane Stein
(deceased); Robert L. Stein; Robert M. Stein; Michelle
Dekel; B&D Investments; and all other persons unknown
claiming any right, title, estate, interest, or lien in the real
estate described in the complaint herein,
Defendants.

THIS SUMMONS IS DIRECTED TO THE ABOVE
NAMED DEFENDANTS.

1. YOU ARE BEING SUED. The Plaintiff has started a
lawsuit against you. The Plaintiffs Complaint against you
is attached to this summons. Do not throw these papers
away. They are official papers that affect your rights.
You must respond to this lawsuit even though it may not
yet be filed with the Court and there may be no court file
number on this summons.

**2. YOU MUST REPLY WITHIN 20 DAYS TO PROTECT
YOUR RIGHTS.** You must give or mail to the person
who signed this summons a **written response** called an
Answer within 20 days of the date on which you received
this Summons. You must send a copy of your Answer to
the person who signed this summons located at:
533 West Main Street, Marshall, Minnesota 56258

3. YOU MUST RESPOND TO EACH CLAIM. The An-
swer is your written response to the Plaintiffs Complaint.
In your Answer you must state whether you agree or dis-
agree with each paragraph of the Complaint. If you be-
lieve the Plaintiff should not be given everything asked
for in the Complaint, you must say so in your Answer.

**4. YOU WILL LOSE YOUR CASE IF YOU DO NOT
SEND A WRITTEN RESPONSE TO THE COMPLAINT
TO THE PERSON WHO SIGNED THIS SUMMONS.**
If you do not Answer within 20 days, you will lose this
case. You will not get to tell your side of the story, and
the Court may decide against you and award the Plain-
tiff everything asked for in the complaint. If you do not
want to contest the claims stated in the complaint, you
do not need to respond. A default judgment can then
be entered against you for the relief requested in the
complaint.

5. LEGAL ASSISTANCE. You may wish to get legal
help from a lawyer. If you do not have a lawyer, the Court
Administrator may have information about places where
you can get legal assistance. **Even if you cannot get
legal help, you must still provide a written Answer to
protect your rights or you may lose the case.**

6. ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION. The parties
may agree to or be ordered to participate in an
alternative dispute resolution process under Rule 114
of the Minnesota General Rules of Practice. You must
still send your written response to the Complaint even
if you expect to use alternative means of resolving this
dispute.

**7. THIS LAWSUIT MAY AFFECT OR BRING INTO
QUESTION TITLE TO REAL PROPERTY** located in
Anoka County, State of Minnesota, legally described as
follows:

**Lot 2, Block 1, Martin's Addition to Anoka, accord-
ing to the map or plat thereof on file and of record
in the office of the County Recorder in and for
Anoka County, Minnesota.**

**8. THE OBJECT OF THIS ACTION IS TO DETERMINE
THE TITLE TO THE LAND DESCRIBED ABOVE AND
THE RIGHTS OF ALL PARTIES RESPECTIVELY
HEREIN.**

RUNCHEY, LOUWAGIE & WELLMAN, P.L.L.P.
Dated: 4/23/15, /s/ Kyle O'Dwyer, Attorney for Plaintiff
533 West Main Street, Marshall, MN 56258
Phone: 507-537-0515,
Attorney Reg. No. 0395561
(Published May 22, 29, June 5, 2015, Anoka County Record) #227

Book Bike *cont. from pg 5*

“Perhaps they haven’t gone
far enough? I mean, why
wouldn’t you combine the
book bike with a pedal pub?
If they want to garner an
audience, bring those two
things together,” said Peter
Nelson, public policy di-
rector for the Center of the
American Experiment.

Rochester ordered a custom-
built book cart from a Bos-
ton bike specialist for about
\$4,000. The brightly colored cart carries about
100 mostly children’s books and promotional
materials, sporting the library’s logo as it rolls
along. It converts to a push cart to roll through
city skyways in winter.

Riders cover a one-mile radius from the down-
town library, leaving longer drives to the city’s
bookmobile. One staff book biker trolls the cart,
while a posse pedals alongside to help check
out books, distribute library cards and provide
giveaways. The roadmap calls for pit stops at
parks, the farmers market, the YMCA and busi-
nesses in an effort mainly focused
on reaching out to families.

“I think this is a good way to bring
the public library to consumers. It
also really sort of educates on ur-
ban transportation and alternative
transportation at the same time,
something the co-op is very in-
volved in,” said Brad Smith, pub-
lic and member relations manager
for Rochester People’s Food Co-
op, the site of a stop-off.

A team of 18 library staff members
will take turns at the wheel over
the summer. RPL’s director and
other senior staff even plan to strap
on a helmet. No word on whether
the program pays mileage.

“I’m kind of short, so I need a
specific bike. My legs are not
long enough. But yes, I’m hoping
sometime this summer, I will be
out on the bike,” said Gurung.

Rochester plans to feature the
book bike concept at the fall
meeting of the Minnesota Library
Association conference. How far
book bikes and other arts and
cultural programs go depends on
what happens in the legislative
conference committee underway
in St. Paul.

When the 2015 session started,



Rochester Public Library photo

GEARING UP: Rochester’s book bike was custom-built for about \$4,000
and also converts to a push cart to roll through the city skyways in winter.

libraries were lobbying for a 35 percent
increase in Legacy funding to \$4.25 million.
But the GOP-led House voted to appropriate
\$1.5 million in 2016 and \$2.5 million in
2017, while the DFL-controlled Senate voted
to appropriate \$2.95 million annually. A
conference committee is negotiating the final
amount.

The Minnesota Library Association has issued
a legislative alert, directing its 600 members
statewide to urge legislative conferees to sup-
port the Senate level of Legacy funding for li-
braries — a slight cut.



Steve Fields
Minnesota Attorney



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Anoka County RECORD

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